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Seemy 1644-1704

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DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

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VIRGINIA

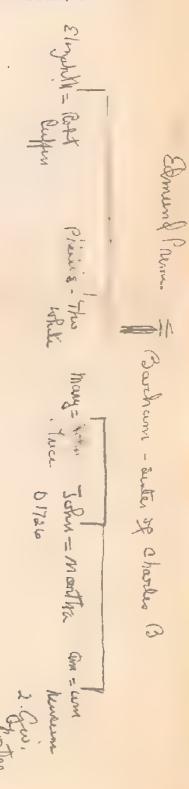
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Fort Loudoun Seminary
Winchester, Va.



Original in Watson Camily Folder

(THE SPENSE OR SPENCER LINE)

LINE NO. A13

12. ENSIGN WILLIAM SPENCER, (or SPENSE), THE IMMIGRANT, BORN IN ENGLAND; DIED AFTER 1637 IN SURRY CO., VA.; WAS "YEOMAN & ANCIENT PLANTER, CAME TO THE VIRGINIA COLONY IN THE FIRST SUPPLY IN 1608. WAS HONEST, VALIANT AND INDUSTRIOUS WORKMAN, AND FIRST TO CHOOSE LAND. HE WAS AN ENSIGN, MEMBER OF THE HOUSE OF BURGESSES FOR JAMESTOWN IN THE FIRST ASSENBLY IN 1019; BURGESS FOR MULBERRY ISLAND IN 1024; PATENTED 12 ACRES OF LAND ON JAMESTOWN ISLAND IN 1624 AT WHICH TIME HE HAD A WIFE ALICE AND A DAUGHTER ALICE. BORN 1620. IN 1632-3 HE WAS BURGESS OF MULBERRY ISLAND" (REF: "ENCYCLOPEDIA OF VIRGINIA BIOGRAPHY", Vol. 1, P. 329; HOTTEN'S EMIGRANTS, P. 226-- SHOWS AMONG THOSE LIVING AT JAMESTOWN ISLAND IN 1624, "WILLIAM SPENCER CAME IN THE "SARAH", ALICE HIS WIFE , ALICE THEIRE DAUGHTER AGED 4 YEARS . AMONG THE DEAD AT JAMES CITY AND ON THE ISLAND IS MENTIONED WILLIAM Spencer a child' (Hotten's Emigrants, p. 229), who was almost CERTAINLY A SON OF THIS FAMILY. NUMEROUS LAND GRANTS WERE MADE TO WILLIAM SPENCER IN SURRY Co., VA. IN 1624 HE IS REFERRED TO AS "ENSIGN WILLIAM SPENCER" IN A GRANT TO JOHN JOHNS, YEOMAN (REF: "CAVALIERS & PIONEERS" BY MRS. NUGENT. P. 4). A GRANT OF 550 Acres of LAND IN SURRY Co., VA. IN 1635 CALLS HIM "WILLIAM SPENCER, GENT." INDICATING THAT HE WAS A JUSTICE OF THE COUNTY AT THAT TIME. WE HAVE MENTIONED THE TWO LARGEST GRANTS MADE TO HIM, ONE FOR 1100 ACRES OF LAND IN 1635, WHICH WAS LATER HELD BY ROBERT SHEPPARD AND BY HIM DEEDED TO WILLIAM CAUFIELD IN 1652; AND ONE FOR 1350 ACRES OF LAND IN 1637, WHICH WAS INHERIT-ED BY WILLIAM COCKERHAM. THE DATE OF WILLIAM SPENCER'S DEATH IS UNCERTAIN. THE LAST REFERENCE TO HIM IS IN THE LAND GRANT OF 1637. ON JANUARY 21, 1628 NICHOLAS SPENCER TESTIFIED THAT JOHN LIGHTFOOT LEFT HIS PROPERTY TO WILLIAM SPENCER (REF: "MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL & GENERAL COURT OF COLONIAL VIRGINIA." P. 181) WHICH MAY INDICATE A RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SPENCER & LIGHTFOOT. ONLY THE TWO DAUGHTERS, ELIZABETH (WIFE OF ROBERT SHEPPARD) AND _ (WIFE OF CAPT. WILLIAM COCKERHAM), SEEM TO HAVE SURVIVED HIM; AT LEAST, ROBERT SHEPPARD AND WILLIAM COCKERHAM SEEM TO HAVE INHERITED ALL HIS LAND (REF: "VIRGINIA MAGAZINE OF HISTORY & BIOGRAPHY", Vol. 47, Pp. 370-4).

WILLIAM SPENCER MARRIED IN ENGLAND, ALICE , AND HAD: ELIZABETH, WIFE OF MAJOR ROBERT SHEPPARD; AND ANOTHER DAUGHTER, (GIVEN NAME UNKNOWN), WIFE OF WILLIAM COCKERHAM.

(REF: "VIRGINIA MAGAZINE OF HISTORY & BIOGRAPHY", VOL. No.47, PP. 260-271, & PP. 370374; "Journals of the House of Burgesses of Virginia, 1619-1650/9", P. VII & P. XIV).

LINE No.A13--CONTINUED

COUNTY, VIRGINIA.

ELIZABETH SPENCER MARRIED MAJOR ROBERT SHEPPARD WHO WAS OF SURRY Co., VA.

ELIZABETH SPENCER & MAJ. ROBERT SHEPPARD HAD A DAUGHTER ANN SHEPPARD, WHO MARRIED THOMAS HART.

(REF: IBID., SAME REFERENCE AS ABOVE; ALSO SEE SECTION "A" OF THIS COLLECTED DATA LINES Nos. A30-11; A12-10; A24-10; A33-9; A33-8;

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Dear Blanche:

Mrs.Hines writes me that you wish to know if I will accept "Alice Bridger as wife of Dr.Robert Williamson- Mr.Boddie's new book lists her as such".

As I do not know the first thing about said Alice or why he so lists her, I cannot answer that. And as I am laid up with a cold and a lame ankle I got in auto accident in Florida- from whence I also brought my cold, I have no idea when I shall be able to get to the library to see his book- to say nothing of being more than swamped with work long overdue pertaining to the Order.

If you can send me all the particulars I will take time to look into it- otherwise I cannot possibly give it my attention for goodness knows when, although I fancy it has to do with some of Mrs.H's claims already accepted. I infer this from the fact that in the Tucker line as accepted, Dr.Robert's wife is given as Joan, dau. of Arthur Allen. P presume it is the same Dr.Robert meant in her query.

I am wondering if I must do, now, what I should have done in the beginning when you submitted only abstracts of those Williamson wills. It is my rule to call for records in full in any new claim; but in this the claim seemed well covered by the abstracts submitted; and knowing your wide experience in such things, I accepted them as aufficient.

As I see the point of her inquiry, judging from the data in handit has to do with George Williamson, son of Dr.Robert, and the latter's wife as mother of said George. That is am I right in thinking you are wondering if Dr.Robert had wife Alice Bridges prior to wife Joan who was his widow; and was Alice mother of said George?

Your proof as to George (No.8 in the pedigree) runs:
"Will of George Williamson: son George; son Robert; grandson
Jacob Darden; son John; son Thomas; dau. Hester/ the ////////////
plantation whereon Mr.Reuben Proctor now lives, being being the land
escheated by Col. Joseph Bridger and so made over to my mother and
my brother Robert, by the said Col.Bridger; my four daughters &c"

Proof for Robert Williamson: "Doctor of Physicke- I wish to be buried as near as may be possible to my late deceased father-in-law, Mr.Arthur Allen; to my wife Joan; to son Robert; son George; son Arthur; son Francis; Mr.Robert Burnett as marrying the relict of of Mr.Robert Williamson..... Robert Burnett calls Arthur Allen brother, in his will.

The foregoing seemed to point to Arthur Allen the elder as being "father-in-law" to Dr.Robert, in the sense we use that term to-day and not "stepfather" as the term usually meant in that day, although occasionally we find "in-law" used then as now. Each case in this respect, must be weighed upon its own merits- and in this instance, the accompanying records seemed- and still seem so to me, in the light ag the material I have at hand. Also, this data leaves no doubt as to Dr.Robert having had wife Joan, who survived him and married again. There is nothing in the records given in connection with him personally, that suggests any previous wife.

However, the data given for his son George- that is, the abstract

of his will, left a question in my mind as to the actual meaning of that excheat, because of its peculiar wording. Not that I thought it in any way affected the relationship for I cannot see that it does, in the light of what I have in hand- meaning just what I have quoted here, with the supplementary Allen data.

It is not clear to me what is meant by "escheated by" Bridger. Land escheated to the Crown when no legal claimant appeared and after an "inquisition" or investigation by the official escheator. Then if claimants did appear, after paying the "composition" or fees required to cover costs &c., they might reclaim said land. If not, then the land was open to as "waste" or public land for any one to take up on headright or other means of locating land.

The abstract as sent to me reads as though Bridger might have been the county escheator. I have no record of him as such; but he was an attorney and might have represented Joan Williamson in getting back land that had been escheated. There is not enough for me to form any opinion as to this; but I do not see how he why edse it should read that the land was escheated by him; "and so" turned over to the mother and brother of George Williamson.

If I have these two wills in full; and also have in full whatever it is Mr.Boddie bases the claim that Alice Bridger was wife of Dr.Robert, I might see it that way; but certainly from what I have, there is not one thing to show an Alice Bridger ever lived; nor is there anything to indicate that Joseph Bridger's daughter was wife of Dr.Robert. Also, what I have seems to make of wife Joan daughter of Arthur Allen, "father-in-law" of Dr.Robert's will.

I have just had to reject an "in-law" claim. And it is one that was worked by a "syndicate of New York and Virginia" genealogists who keep their identity secret; and who charge very big fees. This much was told me by their client who hoped to join the Order through Alice, wife of Henry Seawell of Virginia, as the daughter of Captain Thomas Willoughby. You may recall that a patent of Thomas, of 1654, names Alice, Thomasand Eliz. Willoughby, as headrights. Thomas and Elizabeth are accounted for as his children. Alice has always been supposed to have been the wife and mother of the children.

However, a record was found where Thomas Willoughby called Lemuel Mason "grandson-in-law". Mason had married Ann Seawell, dau. of Henry and wife Alice.

On the surface, that looked like a pretty good claim to Thomas as the grandfather to Ann Seawell Mason; and said syndicate worked out a long series-mostly arguments- to show that she was, with a number of records to back them up.

Well, I have turned it down claiming that he was only stepfather step-grandfather to Ann, using their own proofs to upset their claim. For one thing, they either failed to understand early Va. conditions; or else tried to make them appear differently from what they were. For instance, what do you think of this for logic: In order to upset Alice, headright, as by any chance, being the wife, they maintained that Thomas married some one who either came with her parents or was born in Virginia and who never left Virginia; and married 1619 or 1620. I asked how, in that event, it happened she was not mentioned in either the List of Living, 1623/4; nor in the Muster, 1624/5, if living in Virginia as his wife, at the time each census was taken. I have not had time for a reply. And this kind of work drew a big fee, not only for Virginia end but she had them trace Willoughby of England when she is not

a Willoughby at all- even if Ann Seawell's mother was the mother of Willoughby's children. At least, said lady is not a Willoughby unless they can produce records to prove that Thomas was a grandfather at the age of 32 or 33 years. My finding was that he had married an Alice who was a widow with a daughter Alice when he married her.

And by the way, I went all through that Muster, page by page, to look for any such mother and daughter who might have been hiw wife and stepdaughter. Of course, it doesn't bollow that they were in Virginia at that time. May have come in later. Hiw son was born in 1632, per Merchant Taylor School records. But I found Alice Spencer, wife of William, they having daughter Alice aged 4, at time of Muster. Sid William Spencer secured patent as late as 1638 50 of course his wife could not have been the mother of Willoughby's children; but altho' Spencer's land is mentioned later, in patents, he does not appear alive again- I mean so we know he was alive.

Said land was on Lawne's Creek. I find no mention of him or his family in your books. Is there anything in Boddie about said Spencers? If not and you have nothing in your notes to refute, it seems to me it might well have been Alice Scencer who married Henry Seawell (the daughter, I mean) and had daughter Ann born either in 1634 or 1635. Sid Alice was all of twelve by 1631 or 1632- marriageable age at that time. And as the first and only mention of Lemuel as grandson-in-law was in 1655; and we hear of Alice Willoughby for first time in 1654- Thomas may well have married her as second wife; and of Gourse would have been interested in her son, Henry- about whom this all came out. This is not of any great importance since it does not open up any new line for any one- except to give the Masons the Spencers, if it works out; and they are already eligibles through Mason. It is merely an it4m of interest, to even partially identify even a second wife of Willoughby.

I don't expect you to make any search for this; but if you happen to have any notes at hand on Spencers, I shall appreciate it if you will report on this.

Sincerely yours,

Minnie G.Cook.

I believe I failed to comment on those dates- the Power atty. &c: I have changed this to 1695/6, in my copy of Val.Pa. it being the logical date for page, preceding that on p. 188, which is given as 1695

I don't understand in the least about I.W. records, if they do not follow the usual method of recording. That is, all recording dates I have ever had occasion to take from court records, are the date of the at which the ducumentd were offered tor probate or approval and accepted as of record. hey are not supposed to be dated according to just any old time a clerk happened to get around to scribbling them in a book.